



FORTY-SEVENTH

**ANNUAL REPORT**

OF THE

**Health of Stafford.**

---

**CYRIL BANKS,**

M.B., B.S. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Sheff.)

*MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH*

---

**1920**

---

STAFFORD:

Printed by W. H. Smith & Son, Greengate Press





FORTY-SEVENTH

# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## Health of Stafford.

---

CYRIL BANKS,

M.B., B.S. (Lond.), D.P.H. (Sheff.)

*MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH*

---

1920

---

STAFFORD:

Printed by W. H. Smith & Son, Greengate Press.

# STAFF

OF THE

## Public Health Department.

---

### Medical Officer of Health

and Medical Superintendent, Infectious Diseases Hospital;  
Medical Officer, Infant Welfare Centre.  
(Also Assistant School Medical Officer, County Education Committee).

CYRIL BANKS, M.B., B.S. (LONDON), D.P.H. (SHEFFIELD).

Fellow of the Society of Medical Officers of Health.  
Member of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

### Inspector of Nuisances

and Lodging-House Inspector, Inspector under the Canal  
Boats Act, and Inspector under the Housing (Inspection of  
District) Regulations, 1910

JAMES H. DRURY, CERT. R. SAN. INST.,  
AND CERTIFICATED MEAT INSPECTOR.

### Assistant Inspector of Nuisances

R. BILL, CERT. R. SAN. INST.

### Health Visitor

and Assistant Inspector of Nuisances :

MISS C. E. SUFFIELD, CERT. R. SAN. INST.,  
CERT. CENT. MIDWIVES BOARD.

### Matron of Infectious Diseases Hospital

MISS M. BORTON.

### Clerk

R. FOWELL.



STAFFORD,

*April 5th, 1921.*

To the Chairman and Members of  
the Public Health Committee.

Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit herewith the Forty-seventh Annual Report of the Health of Stafford.

The year 1920 was a very healthy one for the country as a whole, and the health of Stafford was most satisfactory. The death rate was extremely low and the rate of infantile mortality was the lowest (by a small fraction) yet recorded in the Borough.

I have to thank the Sanitary Inspector, Mr. J. H. Drury, and the Health Visitor, Miss Suffield, for figures relating to their work during the year, and to express my appreciation of the valuable support of these officials, of the Matron of the Isolation Hospital, and, indeed, of each member of the Staff throughout the year.

I am,  
Your obedient Servant,  
CYRIL BANKS.



# REPORT

---

## **I.—NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.**

### **Area.**

The Borough of Stafford contains an area of 3,420 acres.

### **Physical Features and General Character of the District.**

The Town is comparatively flat, the difference between the highest and lowest levels being only about 40 feet. The average altitude is about 250 feet above Ordnance Datum.

It may be roughly divided into an East and West Watershed, both draining into the River Sow.

The subsoil is mainly gravel.

When the River is in flood a considerable area of land within the Borough is under water, but the flood water rapidly passes away.

### **Social Conditions.**

The chief occupations are Boot and Shoe Manufacture, and General and Electrical Engineering. No evidence has, as yet, been produced which points to widespread effects of any particular local industry upon health, except for the fact that tuberculosis is somewhat prevalent among boot and shoe operatives.

### **Vital Statistics.**

POPULATION.—Owing to disturbance resulting from the war there is great difficulty in forming a correct estimate of the population, and this difficulty will exist until the results of the 1921 Census are published. The Registrar-General estimates the population of the Borough at the middle of 1920 as 27,762. This figure is used in this report in calculating the birth-rate and death-rate.

BIRTHS.—The number of births *registered* during the year was 622, of which 316 were males and 306 females. This is greater by 124 than the number of births the previous

year. The Birth-rate works out at 22.40 per thousand persons living, as compared with 17.90 per thousand in 1919. The birth-rate for the 148 smaller towns of England and Wales (of which Stafford is one) for the year 1920 is provisionally given by the Registrar-General as 24.9. Illegitimate births numbered 20, or 3.2 per cent. of the total, as compared with 3.4 per cent. in the previous year.

DEATHS.—The total deaths registered as belonging to the district were 296, of which 146 were males and 150 were females. This number excludes those persons who died in Stafford but whose usual place of residence had been elsewhere ; on the other hand, it includes the deaths of Stafford residents who died in other places. The returns are equal to an annual rate of 10.66 per thousand living (accepting the Registrar-General's estimate of population). This is a remarkably low death-rate. The rate for 1919 was 13.11, and the average for the preceding five years was 14.59. The rate for the 148 smaller towns in England and Wales for 1920 was 11.3.

Causes of Death.—Civilians only.		Males.	Females
All Causes .....		146	150
1	Enteric Fever .....	0	0
2	Small-Pox .....	0	0
3	Measles .....	0	0
4	Scarlet Fever .....	0	0
5	Whooping Cough .....	0	1
6	Diphtheria and Croup .....	5	5
7	Influenza .....	2	2
8	Erysipelas .....	0	0
9	Pulmonary Tuberculosis .....	16	14
10	Tuberculous Meningitis .....	3	1
11	Other Tuberculous Diseases .....	4	1
12	Cancer, Malignant Disease .....	13	12
13	Rheumatic Fever .....	0	2
14	Meningitis .....	0	1
15	Organic Heart Disease .....	10	16
16	Bronchitis .....	10	12
17	Pneumonia (all forms) .....	8	6
18	Other Respiratory Diseases .....	5	2
19	Diarrhoea, &c., (under 2 years).....	0	1
20	Appendicitis and Typhlitis .....	1	1
21	Cirrhosis of Liver .....	1	0
21A	Alcoholism .....	0	1
22	Nephritis and Bright's Disease .....	5	2
23	Puerperal Fever .....	0	2
24	Parturition, apart from Puerperal Fever ....	0	2
25	Congenital Debility, &c. ....	11	6
26	Violence, apart from Suicide .....	4	2
27	Suicide .....	2	0
28	Other defined diseases .....	45	58
29	Causes ill-defined or unknown .....	1	0

INFANTILE MORTALITY.—Improvements in the general sanitation of the country, together with efforts directed towards infant welfare, have substantially reduced the infantile mortality in recent years. In addition to these factors the climatic conditions of 1920 were favourable to infant life, the summer being temperate and not tending to the development of summer diarrhoea. In Stafford the infantile mortality rate was the lowest (by a fraction) ever recorded, working out at 65.9. This is a reliable figure not subject to errors in estimating the population, because it represents the number of registered deaths of infants under one year of age (41) expressed per thousand registered births. The previous year the rate was 80.3. The figure for the 148 smaller towns of England and Wales for 1920 was 80.

The following table gives the local figures for the previous ten years :—

Year.	Number of Deaths.	Rate per 1,000 Births.
1910	50	94
1911	69	118
1912	47	80
1913	74	127
1914	56	96
1915	50	95
1916	35	69
1917	33	66
1918	47	102
1919	40	80
Average for Ten Years	50.1	92.7
1920	41.	65.9

The causes of the forty-one deaths were stated to be :—Tuberculous Diseases, 3 ; Bronchitis and Pneumonia, 9 ; Congenital Debility and Malformation (including Premature Birth), 17 ; Convulsions (cause not assigned), 6 ; Diarrhoea, 1 ; other diseases, 5.



ZYMOTIC DEATH-RATE.—There were 12 deaths registered as due to the Zymotic diseases, 10 of them being due to Diphtheria, one to Whooping Cough, and one to Diarrhoea. The Zymotic death-rate was 0.43 compared with 1.14, the average during the preceding ten years.

TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CORRECTED DEATHS FROM EACH OF THE SEVEN CHIEF ZYMOTIC DISEASES IN THE TEN YEARS 1910 TO 1919 AND IN THE YEAR 1920.

DISEASES.	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	Average Annual Number of Deaths in the ten years 1910-1919	1920
Small-Pox..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles ..	21	5	7	1	15	2	3	1	15	..	7	..
Scarlet Fever ..	..	3	..	..	..	3	3	2	..	..	1.1	..
Diphtheria ..	..	3	2	..	..	..	6	23	13	12	5.9	10
Whooping Cough ..	1	1	1	..	8	4	2	6	..	1	2.4	1
Fever { Typhus ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Enteric ..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	0.3	..
Continued ..	..	..	..	12	11	7	..	12	3	..	9.4	1
Diarrhoeal Diseases..	5	41	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total ..	27	53	12	13	35	16	16	44	32	13	26.1	12
Zymotic Death-rate per 1,000 living ..	1.21	2.42	0.54	0.57	1.52	0.77	0.74	1.86	1.32	0.48	1.14	0.43

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.—There were 30 deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis, with an annual rate of 1.08 per 1,000. The average for the preceding ten years was 28.7, with a rate of 1.26 per 1,000.

Year.	Number of Deaths.	Rate per 1,000.
1910	32	1.43
1911	38	1.73
1912	26	1.17
1913	27	1.19
1914	25	1.08
1915	37	1.78
1916	24	1.12
1917	19	0.8
1918	34	1.4
1919	25	0.94
Yearly Average 1910-1919	28.7	1.26
1920	30	1.08

## **II.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.**

### **Water Supply.**

Mr. Plant, the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, states :—  
“ This is ample for the whole of the District, and has invariably been of the highest quality. In his latest report, the analyst states ‘ the water still remains of excellent quality.’

“ The supply is constant, and the source is from the pebble beds of the new red sandstone formation.”

In the report for 1919 attention was called to the unsatisfactory water supply to the houses at Doxey. It was pointed out that the supply was derived from shallow wells sunk in the gardens at the rear, and as in most cases the sewage from the houses was also disposed of on this land there was a possibility of the wells becoming polluted. During 1920 chemical and bacteriological tests were made, and in several instances the results showed the water to be unsuitable for drinking purposes. The recommendations made by the Public Health Committee resulted in the Council's decision to extend the town water supply to the Borough boundary at Doxey, and at the end of the year the preliminary steps were being taken by the Water Works Committee.

During the year the Department also had under consideration the water supply of certain isolated cottages in another outlying district of the town, with the result that the owner reconstructed the wells so as to prevent pollution by surface washings.

### **Rivers and Streams.**

The Borough Engineer states : “ No serious pollution has taken place in recent years. As the town is drained entirely on the separate system a certain amount of pollution is caused by foul liquid being thrown on to the yards at the rear of houses, and this finds its way into the brook courses. Every effort is made to check this by means of handbills warning householders of the penalties to which they are liable for this offence.”

### **Drainage and Sewerage.**

“ CHARACTER.—The Town is drained entirely on the separate system, the whole of the surface water being discharged into the river or brook-courses. The sewage gravitates to the Sewage Reception Tank at the Corporation Depot, Lammascote Road, from whence it is pumped to



the Precipitation Tanks, and there treated with chemicals and finally purified on land. The filtration area is insufficient for the growing needs of the Borough, and as no more land in the neighbourhood of the Farm is available a scheme has been prepared for dealing with the sewage on bacteriological lines, but the work has not yet been commenced."

### **Closet Accommodation.**

There are 3,283 water-closets with flushing cisterns and 2,380 waste-water closets in the Borough. The number of pail and midden privies remains about the same, 30, in outlying houses. There have been no conversions of privies into water-closets during the year. The waste-water closets still continue to give a great deal of trouble in stoppages. Out of 2,393 stoppages, 1,921 were waste-water closets.

### **Refuse Disposal.**

House refuse is collected weekly and disposed of at the Corporation destructor. This service is under the Borough Engineer.

The receptacles for household refuse in use in a large proportion of the houses are wooden tubs, without any covering. This arrangement, in addition to being unsightly, encourages mice, rats and flies; these creatures must be regarded as enemies to the health of the public. In the past, worn tubs have been repaired by the Corporation, but the Health Committee decided in July that when existing tubs fall into a state of disrepair the owners must replace them by bins of galvanised iron, or other suitable impervious material, with rainproof cover. This makes a step forward, but it is to be hoped the time is not far distant when the Committee will see fit to deal efficiently with this out-of-date system.

### **Sanitary Inspection of District.**

Mr. J. H. Drury, the Sanitary Inspector, presents the following table, summarising the routine work of the year. A glance at the headings reveals the wide field covered by the routine sanitary work which is being carried out day by day, and a reader possessing a little imagination will be able to picture for himself the effects on the health and comfort of the townspeople which would ensue if these efforts were not enthusiastically maintained. The lowering of the death-rate and the improvements in the general health of the nation which have steadily taken place during the last forty or fifty years are due to a complexity of



causes, and cannot be properly attributed to any one factor alone, but prominent among the beneficial agencies stands the general sanitary work such as is set out below, aiming as it does to improve man's environment at home and at work and to secure the purity of the food which he eats, the water he drinks and the air he breathes.

REPORT OF INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES FOR THE YEAR 1920.

	Number of		Notices.		Nuisances abated.	
	Inspec- tions.	Defects.	In- spectors	Autho- rity.	In- spectors	Autho rity.-
Dwelling-houses and Schools .. .. .	2793	..	..	..	..	..
Houses requiring cleansing .. ..	..	7	7	2	3	1
Structural defects ..	..	55	55	23	30	18
Overcrowding .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Housing of Working- Classes Act .. ..	472	..	22	..	..	..
Lodging-houses .. ..	9	3	3	..	3	..
Factories & Workshops	162	45	2	..	2	..
Dairies & Milkshops ..	29	1	1	..	1	..
Cowsheds .. .. .	67	8	8	..	8	..
Bakehouses .. .. .	60	5	5	..	5	..
Slaughterhouses.. ..	461	17	17	..	17	..
Fried Fish Shops ..	24	3	3	..	3	..
Canal Boats .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ashpits and want of receptacles for refuse	..	5	5	1	4	1
Deposits of refuse and manure .. .. .	..	8	8	1	7	1
Water closets .. ..	..	79	75	10	54	7
House drainage defects	..	68	68	13	58	9
Water supply .. ..	..	2	2	..	2	..
Pigstyes .. .. .	..	2	2	..	2	..
Animals improperly kept .. .. .	..	1	..	1	..	1
Offensive trades ..	12	1	1	..	..	1
Smoke observations ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Defective yard pave- ments .. .. .	..	3	3	..	1	..
Other nuisances.. ..	..	1	1	..	1	..
Closet stoppages cleared .. .. .	..	2393	..	..	..	..
Totals .. .. .	4089	2707	288	51	201	39

Unwholesome food—

Number of surrenders	..	..	..	..	..	148
Number of seizures ..	..	..	..	..	..	0
Condemned by Magistrate ..	..	..	..	..	..	0
Prosecutions for exposing for sale	..	..	..	..	..	0
Convictions .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	0
Prosecutions for exposing for sale	..	..	..	..	..	0

Precautions against Infectious Disease—

Lots of infected bedding disinfected or destroyed	..	132
Houses disinfected after infectious disease	..	123

Miss Suffield, the Health Visitor, in addition to her other duties, carried out the following inspections:—

	Visits.	Structural defects reported.
Houses .. .. .	17	20
Workrooms .. .. .	29	2
Women's Workplaces ..	19	9

### Premises and Occupations which Can be Controlled by Bye-laws.

Cowsheds ... ..	17
Milkshops ... ..	16
Common Lodging-houses ... ..	5
Offensive Trades ... ..	5
Slaughterhouses ... ..	21

There are no Bye-laws in force in the Borough in regard to houses let in lodgings and offensive trades, and there is no need for regulations in regard to underground sleeping rooms.

### Factory and Workshops Acts.

INSPECTIONS.—Thirty-two inspections of Factories and 190 of workshops were made. Forty-five defects were discovered, of which 33 were remedied as a result of action taken (including two written notices).

HOMEWORK.—Lists of outworkers were received as follows:—

Wearing Apparel (making):—

(Twice a year), 2 lists relating to three workmen.

(Once a year) three lists relating to 19 workmen.

Umbrellas (twice a year) two lists relating to two workmen.

No prosecutions were necessary, and there was no case in which outwork was carried on in infected or unwholesome premises.

REGISTERED WORKSHOPS.—The workshops on the Register at the end of the year were:—

Bakehouses ... ..	20
Boot Making and Repairing ... ..	28
Dressmaking ... ..	10
Tailors ... ..	14
Milliners ... ..	15
Cycle and Motor Repairing ... ..	8
Miscellaneous ... ..	97

Total ... .. 192

Notifications received from H.M. Inspector as to matters remediable under the Public Health Acts ... ..	1
Reports (of action taken) sent to H.M. Inspector ...	1

### **Insanitary Conditions on Stone Flat.**

During the year attention was paid to the disgusting conditions which prevailed at such times as the Stone Flat was occupied by travelling shows. As far as could be ascertained no sanitary conveniences of any kind were provided to meet the elementary needs of the caravan dwellers, with the result that the hedgebottoms were indescribably fouled with urine, faeces and domestic rubbish.

Pressure was put upon the Stafford Common Lands Committee in order to secure the thorough cleansing of the ditches. In addition the committee were pressed to undertake the provision of suitable temporary conveniences on future occasions. This undertaking was given by the Chairman of the Committee, but up to the end of the year no further shows had visited the ground, so that no opportunity had arisen of judging the adequacy of the proposed arrangements. This matter will continue to receive attention. Other show grounds in the town have been under observation, but there are no comments to be made upon them.

### **Sanitary Condition of Schools.**

The Medical Officer of Health is Assistant County School Medical Officer, the work of school medical inspection being carried out under the County Education Committee. The Medical Officer of Health has usually made a sanitary survey of each school on the occasion of his visits for medical inspection of school children; insanitary conditions such as dirty state of classrooms, defective closets and urinals, and absence of waste bins have been reported to the Education Committee's officers, and there has been no difficulty in securing a remedy. Action taken for preventing the spread of infectious disease in the schools is referred to in Section IV. (Measles and Diphtheria).

Work of the greatest value to the health of the town is being carried out by the school medical service, including the routine medical inspection of school children, the work of the school nurses, the opening of a minor ailment clinic, eye clinic and dental clinic. These matters are all dealt with in the annual report of the County School Medical Officer, which should be read by all persons interested in the social welfare of the Borough.



### **III.—FOOD.**

#### **(a) Milk Supply.**

The milk supply is produced very largely within the Borough or in the surrounding district. On the whole it appears to be of good quality, and is practically all distributed to the houses by vendors, very little being sold from milkshops. There still remains a good deal to be done as regards cleanliness, and more might be attempted in the way of preventing the access of impurities to the milk during the course of milking and distributing. In order to stimulate interest in this matter a lecture was arranged during "Baby Week," the committee being fortunate enough to secure the services of Mr. Wilfred Buckley, C.B.E., Chairman of the National Clean Milk Society. Invitations were widely distributed to those in the milk trade, and a few of the producers did actually attend and contribute to the discussion, but the constitution of the audience suggested that the matter was of more interest to the consumers than to those in the trade.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS ORDER.—There are 17 cowsheds and 16 milkshops within the Borough. Sixty-seven visits were paid to the cowsheds and 29 to the milkshops, and in each case the occupier's attention was called to the requirements as to cleanliness and limewashing; these were complied with.

#### **(b) Meat.**

The total amount of meat condemned during the year as unfit for human consumption was 14 tons from 141 carcasses, classified as follows:—oxen, 88; sheep, 32; pigs, 9; calves, 3; frozen mutton, 5; frozen beef, 3; pickled beef, 1. In 29 cases the reason for condemnation was tuberculous disease in various forms.

There is no public abattoir in the district. The meat is inspected in the slaughterhouses at the time of slaughter as far as practicable. The quality of the meat sold in Stafford is good, and the butchers co-operate with the Public Health Department by notifying those cases in which the animal slaughtered appears to be affected with disease. Requests were made for inspection in 174 instances. All casualty carcasses are inspected as a matter of routine, and a great proportion of the meat condemned is from this class of carcase; the decrease in the amount of meat condemned compared with last year is accounted for by the de-control



of the sale of meat and the decrease in the number of animals sent in from the surrounding districts for slaughter and inspection.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

		In 1914.	In Jan., 1920.	In Dec., 1920
Registered	...	13	11	10
Licensed	... ..	12	11	11
		—	—	—
Total	...	25	22	21

Of the licensed slaughterhouses 10 are "old licensed slaughterhouses," and one has an annual license for pigs only.

#### (c) **Other Foods.**

Regular investigations were made as to the sanitary conditions of bakehouses and other premises where foods are manufactured or exposed for sale. The bakehouses are kept in fairly satisfactory condition. The Market Hall was also regularly inspected and the meat, fish, and foodstuffs on sale there found to be in sound condition.

Unfortunately the standard of cleanliness in the food trade is not uniformly high. There is much unnecessary exposure of food stuffs such as bread, pastry, sweets and other articles, permitting pollution by dust and flies.

During the year 85 specimens of tinned food,  $1\frac{3}{4}$  cwt. of fish, and five barrels of apples were condemned and surrendered as unfit for food.

IV.—PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER  
INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notification of Infectious Diseases.

The following Table shows the number of notifications of the infectious diseases during the year, together with the numbers for the previous ten years. The average for the previous ten years is also given. The mortality from infectious diseases is given under Section I. (Vital Statistics).

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	Average for ten years.	1920
Small-Pox ..	29	30	26	25	34	139	228	117	20	30	67.8	35
Scarlet Fever ..	5	22	28	10	16	22	82	282	273	101	84.1	93
Diphtheria ..	1	22	1	5	1	1	5	2	3	1	2.0	1
Enteric Fever ..	10	22	14	11	14	15	7	9	7	13	12.2	12
Erysipelas ..	..	4	3	..	2	..	1	..	..	2	1.2	3
Puerperal Fever ..	..	..	..	..	4	5	10	7	..	10	6.0*	6
Ophthalmia-Neonatorum ..	..	..	..	..	74	69	60	38	41	46	56.0*	52
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ..	..	..	71	49	16	11	8	8	10	19	12.7*	9
Other forms of Tuberculosis ..	..	..	..	17	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..
Cerebro-Spinal Fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..
Poliomyelitis ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..
Encephalitis Leth. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	52	..	18
Pneumonia ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	2
Dysentery ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	..	..
Malaria ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

\* Yearly average since notification made compulsory.

## **Measles.**

The Public Health (Measles and German Measles) Regulations, 1915, which provided for the notification of Measles and German Measles, were rescinded from the end of 1919, so that during 1920 Measles was not a notifiable disease. An arrangement was therefore made by which the head teachers of the Stafford schools kept the Medical Officer of Health informed of any cases occurring among the scholars, and in this way a fair idea of the extension of the disease was obtained. A somewhat extensive outbreak occurred during May and June, but though widespread it was of mild type and caused no deaths. In all 238 cases were reported to the Medical Officer of Health either by teachers or parents. This involved heavy work for the Health Visitor, who made some 314 calls at the homes concerned, her purpose being to make sure that all serious cases were receiving medical attention and to arrange for nursing by the District Nurses where advisable, also to take whatever steps were possible to prevent the spread of the epidemic. School closure was not considered necessary or desirable. The epidemic ended early in July.

## **Small-Pox.**

The Borough has again remained free from this disease

## **Scarlet Fever.**

Only 35 cases occurred, mostly of mild type; 33 of them were treated in hospital. One of the patients was a nurse in the Isolation Hospital, who contracted the illness in the course of her duty. There were no deaths.

## **Diphtheria.**

This disease was prevalent in the country as a whole during 1920. In Stafford 93 cases are known to have occurred, compared with 101 in 1919, 273 in 1918, and 282 in 1917. There were 10 deaths as against 12 in 1919. Eighty-three of the cases were treated in hospital. The most strenuous efforts of the Public Health Department were made to hold this dangerous disease in check. Of the 93 cases no less than 15 were persons who were not notified in the ordinary way, but were only discovered as a result of the constant search made among school children and home "contacts" of notified cases. Most of these 15 persons were convalescents—that is to say a definite history of recent illness was obtained, but the nature of their illness had not been previously detected. Yet they were dangerously infectious



at the time they were discovered. There can be little doubt that had they continued undiscovered they would have spread the infection freely and many more cases would have been caused. Towards the end of the year it became apparent that the methods adopted were securing proper control, and were limiting the outbreaks.\* The method of searching for infectious convalescents which has now become the routine in Stafford was described in last year's report as follows :—

On the occurrence of a case of true Diphtheria in a school child the school is visited by the Medical Officer of Health. The children who have intimately associated with the patient are examined, special attention being given to sore throat or discharge from the nose; suspicious cases are "swabbed," and the swabs sent to the University of Birmingham for bacteriological examination. The reason for this procedure is to detect (a) any mild and unrecognised case of Diphtheria which may have been the source of infection of the patient, or, on the other hand, may have been infected by the patient; (b) any healthy "carrier" of the Diphtheria bacillus, *i.e.*, a person in whose nose or throat the microbes grow without danger to the person himself, but with grave danger to his associates. Similar investigations are also made in many of the homes, with the help of the doctor in charge of the case.

Not infrequently the search results in the detection of an infectious child; isolation is then insisted upon, and the danger removed.

**Attention is drawn to the need for IMMEDIATE medical advice in cases of sore throat in children. The antitoxin treatment of diphtheria, which is of such remarkable value when applied early, is of little use when several days have been wasted in the hope that domestic remedies may cure. It is a safe rule that if a child has a sore throat Diphtheria should be thought of, and Medical advice sought at once, so that treatment may be given.**

The protective inoculation of persons in homes in which cases of Diphtheria had occurred continued to be practised during 1920, apparently with beneficial results, the doctors in the town co-operating in this work very successfully. One instance recorded during the year proved, as was already understood, that the protection conferred lasts only a few weeks.

---

\* This can be confirmed by figures for the first quarter of 1921 available at the time of writing this report. During this period only five cases of Diphtheria were notified, with no deaths, as against 32 cases with three deaths in the corresponding period of 1920.



### **Enteric Fever.**

One case occurred, the patient being a man who had eaten mussels. The mussels were traced back to their origin and the facts reported to the Ministry of Health. The beds from which these particular mussels originated are said to be sewage-polluted, and cases of enteric fever in several localities have been attributed to the consumption of shellfish from them.

### **Encephalitis Lethargica (Sleeping Palsy).**

No case of this disease occurred. One patient was notified as suffering from it, and was admitted to the Isolation Hospital, but death ensued from Tuberculous Meningitis. The original notification was withdrawn.

### **Poliomyelitis and Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis.**

The Borough remained free from these diseases.

### **Public Health (Pneumonia, Malaria, Dysentery, etc.) Regulations, 1918.**

Eighteen cases of Pneumonia were notified as against 52 cases in 1919 (during which year there was an influenza epidemic). Two cases of Dysentery were notified—both ex-soldiers. There was no Malaria.

### **Tuberculosis.**

Notifications of Tuberculosis are received by the Medical Officer of Health, and it is his duty, with the aid of the Health Visitor, to do all that can be done to discover the sources of infection and to endeavour to prevent its spread. Dispensary and institutional treatment is not carried out by the Borough authorities but by the Staffordshire, Wolverhampton and Dudley Joint Committee for Tuberculosis. During the year 63 notifications were received, of which two related to persons who had been previously notified. Of the 61 primary notifications 52 were of Pulmonary Tuberculosis (Consumption), the average for the previous eight years being 56. Miss Suffield paid 55 primary visits and 143 revisits to the homes of consumptives.

### **Ophthalmia Neonatorum.**

When this disease became compulsorily notifiable in 1914 the way was opened for one of the most completely successful pieces of public health work hitherto attempted. Ophthalmia Neonatorum (inflammation of the eyes of the newborn child, due to certain micro-organisms) used to be a fertile source of blindness, and provided many candidates for admission to blind asylums. Although it is a

disease which readily yields to early and persistent treatment, there was failure in the past because the simple treatment prescribed by the doctor was usually carried out inefficiently by the relatives. In recent years things have changed, in Stafford as elsewhere. The Medical Officer of Health on receiving a notification from a doctor or midwife that an infant is suffering from this illness immediately requests the Health Visitor to visit the home to insist on arrangements being made to carry out the doctor's treatment in a proper manner. This usually results in the District Nurse (with whose Society the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee has a financial arrangement) visiting the child three or four times daily for some days to provide skilled attention, subject to medical supervision. Complete cure usually results. This is an example of good work done, not by incurring heavy expenditure, but by simple yet unfailing co-ordination of effort. During the year six cases were notified and all were cured without blemish.

### **Isolation Hospital.**

One hundred and twenty-seven cases were admitted—classified as follows :—

	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Other Diseases.
Stafford Borough ..	33	83	2*
Stafford Rural District	5	4	..
	38	87	2

\* One case of Enteric Fever, one case of Tuberculous Meningitis sent in as Encephalitis Lethargica.

There were 11 deaths, one from Tuberculous Meningitis and 10 from Diphtheria.

The Matron (Miss Borton) is to be congratulated on the smooth and efficient working of the hospital.

### **Ambulance Service.**

Patients were formerly removed to the Isolation Hospital in the Corporation horse-drawn ambulance, with the aid of local contractors. Difficulties arose over night calls, and in frosty weather. These difficulties exist no longer, for the town has received the loan of a motor ambulance from the British Red Cross Society. This ambulance, worked by the staff of a local garage, has proved most valuable, for during the year a considerable proportion of calls happened to come in late in the evening and on Sundays, when trouble might have occurred under the old arrangement. The rapidity with which cases have been brought in from the Rural District has been most satisfactory. The town owes its thanks to the British Red Cross Society for the valuable loan



## V.—MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The responsibilities of the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee include work described in the following paragraphs :—

### Notification of Births Acts.

Six hundred and twenty-six live births and twenty still-births came to the notice of the Medical Officer of Health during the year. Ninety-four per cent. of these were notified to him in accordance with the above Acts, 69 per cent. being notified by the parents and the remainder by doctors or midwives.

(N.B.—The birth-rate is not calculated on these 626 births, but on the 622 births which were *registered* during the year.)

### Health Visiting.

Miss Suffield, the Health Visitor, supplies the following summary of her visits in regard to infant welfare :—

Births (primary visits)	...	...	555
„ (revisits)	...	...	1,902
Ante-natal visits	...	...	29
Visits to older children	...	...	213
Enquiries into infant deaths	...	...	21
Infant Life Protection (Children's Act, 1908)			18

### The Infant Welfare Centre.

As pointed out in the last annual report, an infant welfare centre is not a place to which ailing babies are brought to be given medical treatment. It is an institution to which a mother may bring her baby week by week so that its progress may be watched, and in which the mother is trained in the details of infant feeding and management. The policy adopted is to promote breast feeding where possible ; where artificial feeding is necessary, the mother is advised as to the most suitable diet for the child. Progress in weight and development is recorded week by week, and appropriate changes in diet advised whenever they become necessary. In Stafford very many girls are employed in the factories up to marriage, so that they have little opportunity of getting to know anything about the management of children ; it is the function of the Welfare Centre to offer the guidance required ; thus, haphazard methods of infant feeding are replaced by correct dietaries carefully adjusted to the needs of each individual child. The correct clothing of the infant is a subject which receives attention,

and mothers are taught how to make children's garments. There is no doubt about the valuable and widespread influence of the work carried on at the centre upon the health of the babies of the town.

The centre occupies temporary premises in the Borough Hall, consisting of doctor's consultation room, general waiting and meeting room, baby-weighing room and a kitchen. The sessions are held on Mondays, from 2 to 5 o'clock. There is also a special session on Monday mornings for those who cannot conveniently attend in the afternoons.

The Staff consists of the Medical Officer (the M.O.H.), the Health Visitor, and Voluntary Helpers.

The voluntary workers are provided by the Maternity Committee of the Stafford Guild of Social Welfare; each worker specialises in one of certain duties, such as weighing babies, charting and recording weights, or providing tea for the mothers. These workers have proved most reliable throughout the year, carrying out their duties with regularity and enthusiasm, and so contributing very largely to the success of the centre.

Thanks are due to Miss Bate and the pupils of Tenter Banks School for knitting woolly garments.

Forty-eight sessions were held during the year; 212 new cases were registered, and 2,295 attendances were made. The maximum on any afternoon was 78, the average being 48.

### **Co-ordination of Infant Welfare Work.**

The Stafford Guild of Social Welfare co-operates in the work of the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee by providing voluntary helpers for the Centre, as already described. In addition, the Stafford District Nurses' Society, which is incorporated with the Guild, provides nursing assistance when requested by the Medical Officer of Health for cases of Measles, Whooping Cough, Infantile Diarrhoea, Ophthalmia Neonatorum and other ailments of the young, in consideration of receiving from the Council a sum of £60 per annum (*See Section IV.—Measles, Ophthalmia*).

The Medical Officer of Health is Medical Officer to the Infant Welfare Centre, and is also Assistant County School Medical Officer; this arrangement has the effect of co-ordinating, to some extent, the infant welfare work of the Borough with the school medical service.

### **Baby Week.**

In order to give publicity to the attempts which are being made to preserve child life and "to promote right



ideas and ideals regarding Maternity and Child Welfare," Baby Week celebrations were held in Stafford during the week commencing June 27th as follows :—

Sunday, June 27th.—Stafford P.S.A., Co-operative Hall.

Speaker : Dr. Charles Reid, O.B.E.

Subject : " Infant Welfare."

Monday, June 28th.—In the Co-operative Hall.

Lantern Lecture on " Clean Milk " by Wilfred Buckley, Esq., C.B.E. (Chairman—National Clean Milk Society).

Chairman : Ald. C. W. Miller, J.P. (Chairman—Public Health Committee).

Tuesday, June 29th.—Stafford Branch, British Women's Temperance Association.

Meeting in Friends' Meeting House.

Speaker : Mrs. Beardmore, Stoke-on-Trent.

June 29th and 30th and July 1st.—Borough Hall.

Mothercraft and Child Welfare Exhibition (by arrangement with National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland).

The meetings met with considerable success, and may be said to have achieved the objects in view. The Exhibition was opened by His Worship the Mayor (Dr. F. Milnes Blumer), the opening ceremony being preceded by a parade of decorated perambulators from the Market Hall to the Borough Hall. The Mayoress distributed the prizes to the winners of the annual competitions. These competitions were for the most part not on the lines of the old-fashioned baby shows at which the finest babies took the prizes, but were framed so as to afford recognition to the patience and skill displayed by mothers who had successfully reared their infants in spite of difficulties whether physical, financial or otherwise. Most of the finest babies are healthy from birth, and entail very little trouble to their parents. There are many examples of weakly babies being successfully nurtured solely because of the self-sacrificing efforts of devoted mothers in the presence of adverse conditions. The idea of the competitions was to recognise such efforts ; some of the prize-winners were by no means model babies, the point being that some of them would not have survived at all if they had not had such constant care and attention. The chief prize was the beautiful silver shield presented to the centre by Dr. Blumer for annual award (subject to certain conditions) to the child whose progress displays greatest evidence of careful mothercraft. Dr. Blumer also

gave a valuable prize to the mother of the child whose name was inscribed on the shield, and many other prizes were distributed.

The success of the Exhibition in giving a further impetus to the child welfare movement was attributable in great measure to the ladies who gave their services as demonstrators (especially the Voluntary Aid Detachment under Miss Joyce).

### **Supplies of Milk to Mothers and Infants.**

Local Authorities possess powers to supply milk to expectant and nursing mothers and young children free, or at a cheap rate in cases of necessity. As described in the last annual report these powers were made use of in Stafford, and at the beginning of 1920 some fifty families were being helped in this way. This arrangement was continued until April, when the Committee decided that the supplies should cease. During the period October, 1919, to April, 1920, 112 families received assistance. The circumstances of the applicants were carefully investigated and dealt with according to an income-scale fixed by the Committee.

In December, owing to the distress existing in the town, the Committee decided to recommence the supplies to very necessitous families. In the month of December 141 applications were received, of which 19 were refused and 122 granted.

### **Extension of Maternity and Child Welfare Work.**

The Committee throughout the year devoted considerable thought to the problem of providing a maternity home for the Borough. It is thought that the need for such an institution exists; the need is not so much for a charitable institution for the poor, as for a home which will meet the requirements of the many women of all classes who are, owing to shortage of houses, living in lodgings in which confinements are undesirable. Delegates from the Committee discussed the subject with the authorities of the Staffordshire General Infirmary, and also with the Stafford District Nurses' Society, but up to the end of the year the Committee had been unable to formulate a scheme to lay before the Council. At the time of writing this report there seems very little likelihood of an early solution of the problem.

The provision of better accommodation for the Infant Welfare Centre appears to be impossible at present, though the premises in use are by no means ideal.



## **VI.—SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.**

### **1.—Staff.**—See page 2.

The male Assistant Inspector was appointed on April 21st, 1920, this being a new appointment.

### **2.—Hospital Accommodation.**

*Isolation Hospital, Coton Field.* Accommodation nominally 22 beds.—See Section IV.

*Small-Pox Hospital Accommodation.* There is an agreement by which the Stafford Corporation, together with certain neighbouring authorities, is able to send Small-Pox cases to the North Staffordshire Joint Small-Pox Hospital at Bagnall. The existing Small-Pox Hospital belonging to the Stafford Corporation is maintained in case overflow accommodation should be required.

### **3.—Adoptive Acts, &c., in force in the District.**

Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890.

Baths and Wash-houses Acts.

Stafford Corporation Acts of 1876, 1880, 1896.

It is to be regretted that the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, has not yet been adopted.

### **4.—Chemical and Bacteriological Work.**

The County Council has an arrangement by which bacteriological examinations in suspected cases of Diphtheria, Tuberculosis and Enteric Fever are made at the Laboratory of the University of Birmingham. This service has been freely made use of by the Public Health Department and by some of the medical practitioners in the town. The value of such examinations is explained in Section IV. (Diphtheria).



## VII.—HOUSING.

It is a matter of common knowledge that there is a great shortage of houses in the Borough. In addition to the houses needed for the large number of persons who have at the present time to live in lodgings, there is also a need for new houses to replace those at present not really fit for human habitation. There are at the present time 91 houses in the Borough which come into the latter class, but they cannot be demolished until facilities exist for rehousing the occupants. The Council's scheme for the provision of dwellings on the Coton Field and Lammascote estates makes provision for the erection of 440 houses. Of these 32 were completed and occupied between January 1st and December 31st, 1920. Five new dwellings were erected by private enterprise.

The scarcity of houses has made it impossible to take action in such cases of overcrowding as have come to the notice of the authorities.

As regards the general fitness of the houses in the Borough there is nothing to add to the statements made in the last annual report.

Three houses were closed during the year on account of their insanitary and dangerous state, and they are being demolished.

Action taken during the year is summarised in the appendix.

## APPENDIX.

### HOUSING CONDITIONS. STATISTICS.

Year ended 31st December, 1920

#### 1.—General.

(1) Estimated population (Registrar-General)	...	27,762
(2) General death-rate...	...	10.66
(3) Death-rate from Tuberculosis	...	1.08
(4) Infantile mortality	...	65.9
(5) Number of dwelling-houses of all classes	...	5,710
(6) Number of working-class dwelling-houses	...	5,110
(7) Number of new working-class houses erected	...	38

## 2.—Unfit Dwelling-Houses.

### *I —Inspection.*

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... ..	1,757
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	472
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	91
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation (in a general state of disrepair, or otherwise below the standard of fitness set out in the Manual on Unfit Houses, published by the Ministry of Health) ... ..	290

### *II.—Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ...	26
---	----

### *III.—Action under Statutory Powers.*

#### A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning Act, 1919.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... ..	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit ... ..	0
(a) by owners ... ..	0
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners ... ..	0
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close ... ..	3

#### B.—Proceeding under Public Health Acts—

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... ..	312
---	-----

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied—	
(a) by owners ... ..	218
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners ... ..	0

C.—Proceedings under Sections 17 and 18 of the Housing Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909—

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders ...	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... ..	0
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit ... ..	0
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ...	3
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... ..	0

**3.—Unhealthy Areas.**

Areas represented to the Local Authority with a view to Improvement Schemes under (a), Part I., or (b), Part II., of the Act of 1890 ... ..	Nil
---	-----

Staff engaged on housing work—

Inspector of Nuisances and Assistant.







